

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original): A method of making an unfired refractory component that is resistant to reaction with molten aluminum or magnesium, comprising:

- (a) forming a slurry comprising calcium silicate-containing refractory material and a barium- or strontium-containing compound;
- (b) placing the slurry in a mould;
- (c) dewatering the slurry to form the component; and
- (d) hydrothermally processing the component to form a final product.

Claim 2 (original): A method according to claim 1 wherein the barium- or strontium-containing compound is a barium-containing compound selected from barium sulphate, barium oxide and barium hydroxide.

Claim 3 (original): A method according to claim 2 wherein the barium sulphate is a powder or a slurry.

Claim 4 (original): A method according to claim 2 wherein the barium oxide or the barium hydroxide is an aqueous solution.

Claim 5 (original): A method according to claim 4 wherein the aqueous solution is prepared with water at a temperature of at least 30°C.

Claim 6 (original): A method according to claim 4 wherein

the aqueous solution is prepared with water at a temperature of at least 40°C.

Claim 7 (original): A method of stabilizing a silica-containing porous refractory component against reactions with molten aluminum or magnesium, comprising:

- (a) forming an aqueous solution of an oxide or hydroxide of a group II alkali earth;
- (b) impregnating the component with the solution; and
- (c) drying the impregnated component in air.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A method according to claim [[8]] 7 wherein the group II alkali earth is selected from barium and strontium.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A method according to claim [[8]] 7 further comprising impregnating the component with a sulphuric acid solution and drying the component in air, after step (c).

Claim 10 (currently amended): A method according to claim [[8]] 7 wherein the porous refractory component is a fired component.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A method according to claim [[8]] 7 wherein the porous refractory component is an unfired component.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A method according to claim [[8]] 7 wherein the aqueous solution is formed at a temperature of at least 30°C.

Claim 13 (currently amended): A method according to claim [[8]] 7 wherein the aqueous solution is formed at a temperature of at least 40°C.